

**General Assembly**

Distr.: General
12 July 2013
English
Original: English/Spanish

Sixty-eighth session
Item 104 of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of security and cooperation in the
Mediterranean region

Strengthening of security and cooperation in the
Mediterranean region**Report of the Secretary-General****Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	2
II. Replies from Governments	3
Malta	3
Netherlands	5
Spain	6

* A/68/50.



I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/75, commended the Mediterranean countries for their efforts in meeting common challenges through coordinated overall responses, based on a spirit of multilateral partnership, towards the general objective of turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchanges and cooperation, guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity; encouraged them to strengthen such efforts through, inter alia, a lasting multilateral and action-oriented cooperative dialogue among States of the region; and recognized the role of the United Nations in promoting regional and international peace and security.
2. The General Assembly recognized that the elimination of the economic and social disparities in levels of development and other obstacles, as well as respect and greater understanding among cultures in the Mediterranean area, would contribute to enhancing peace, security and cooperation among Mediterranean countries through the existing forums.
3. The General Assembly called upon all States of the Mediterranean region that had not yet done so to adhere to all the multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, thus creating the conditions necessary for strengthening peace and cooperation in the region. The Assembly encouraged all States of the region to favour the conditions necessary for strengthening the confidence-building measures among them by promoting genuine openness and transparency on all military matters, by participating, inter alia, in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures and by providing accurate data and information to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.
4. The General Assembly encouraged the Mediterranean countries to strengthen further their cooperation in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the possible resort by terrorists to weapons of mass destruction, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and in combating international crime and illicit arms transfers and illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking, which pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region and therefore to the improvement of the current political, economic and social situation and which jeopardize friendly relations among States, hinder the development of international cooperation and result in the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the democratic basis of pluralistic society.
5. Furthermore, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request and on the basis of information received from Member States.
6. In this connection, a note verbale dated 25 February 2013 was sent to all Member States requesting their views on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. Additional replies will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Malta

[Original: English]

[29 May 2013]

At its sixty-seventh session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/75, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region".

Malta fully supports initiatives which, directly or indirectly, strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. From the political perspective, Malta believes that regional initiatives such as the Union for the Mediterranean and the Western Mediterranean Forum (5 plus 5 dialogue) provide important forums for the maintenance of dialogue among the Euro-Mediterranean countries at all levels. Such initiatives also promote project diplomacy and address cross-border issues. Malta's role in these initiatives takes the form of active participation in meetings and their organization as well as the provision of funds, expertise and other resources. Malta is a party to the major non-proliferation treaties and considers the United Nations and its treaty bodies as contributing towards global security and stability. Malta fully supports the establishment of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone and confidence-building measures in the region. From a more technical point of view, Malta has adopted a policy of transparency and submits regular reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

As a co-signatory of General Assembly resolution 67/75, Malta strongly subscribes to the necessity of taking further steps towards strengthening security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. As a small island State in the middle of the Mediterranean and a State member of the European Union, Malta continues to support the promulgation of a closer regional dialogue as a key to regional development, integration and security, as manifested in its continued support of regional organizations and initiatives such as the Union for the Mediterranean and the Western Mediterranean Forum (5 plus 5 dialogue).

Regional developments over the past months have further underlined the relevance of the Union for the Mediterranean as a significant channel of communication between its 43 members. The Union remains a unique organization that brings a number of diverse actors in the region together at the same table. Malta has also consistently called for European Union (EU) support to the Union for the Mediterranean and has welcomed the assumption of EU as the northern co-Presidency.

While recognizing the necessity of keeping up a political dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region, the realization of concrete projects for the benefit of our citizens remains a priority. In this context, Malta has supported the secretariat in Barcelona by providing one of the Deputy Secretaries-General from 2010 until 2013. Malta will maintain its support of the Union for the Mediterranean by seconding Ambassador George Saliba as the Special Envoy of the secretariat.

Malta recognized at an early stage the relevance of "action-oriented cooperative dialogue" among the countries of the Mediterranean to greater security in the region, for the promotion of the economic and social development of the region's societies. In this regard, Malta welcomes the project diplomacy promoted

by the Union for the Mediterranean in areas such as renewable sources of energy, transport, higher education, gender equality and water governance.

Malta regularly contributes financially to the Anna Lindh Foundation — another channel for the promotion of intercultural exchange, dialogue and understanding among the States members of the Union for the Mediterranean — firm in its belief that effective international cooperation is invariably required to permeate from high-level politics to the grass-roots level.

The Western Mediterranean Forum (5 plus 5 dialogue), as a subregional initiative, continues to play a primary role in its contribution to regional cohesion and cooperation and as a complementary forum to wider organizations with the potential, as identified during the Second Malta Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Western Mediterranean Forum, held in Malta on 5 and 6 October 2012, as well as the tenth meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the 5 plus 5 dialogue, held on 16 April 2013 in Nouakchott, to bring to fruition concrete projects in various areas contributing to the realization of the vision for a Mediterranean region of peace and prosperity for its citizens. All 10 countries (5 plus 5) are members of the Union for the Mediterranean, with Libya being an active observer in the wider forum. The 5 plus 5 dialogue is, in fact, increasingly considered as an incubator of ideas for the Union.

The Second Malta Summit reaffirmed the acknowledgement of the dialogue's relevance to the Mediterranean dimension as a practical instrument to develop synergies with regional cooperation frameworks and fund structures. The Summit was held after an interval of nine years and in the aftermath of the historic transformations that took place in the Middle East and North Africa. All 10 countries were represented at the highest level.

In the Malta Declaration adopted at the Second Summit, the opportunity was seized to build a new community based on common values and understanding that would influence future trends. Both the Declaration as well as the working sessions demonstrated the existence of a common agreement on the necessity to maintain the regularity of meetings at ministerial or expert level in the various dimensions of the 5 plus 5 dialogue, and to underline the importance of interface with other regional forums, notably the Union for the Mediterranean. The Malta Declaration also deals with regional security and stability. The 10 States members of the 5 plus 5 dialogue have agreed to engage more actively in regional security issues by boosting regional cooperation and confronting future challenges through a stronger neighbourhood. The Declaration makes a special reference to the fight against transnational terrorism, organized crime and illicit trafficking, especially with training activities, technology transfer, intelligence cooperation and development aid. Those issues fall under the remit of the Ministers of Interior Affairs of the 5 plus 5 dialogue, in which Malta has always been, and continues to be, an active participant.

Malta welcomes the fact that the Declaration adopted at the tenth meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Nouakchott in April 2013 reflects the Malta Declaration and follows on its recommendations.

The 5 plus 5 sectoral initiatives of interior affairs and defence are both very active and relevant to the contemporary Mediterranean situation. The Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security of Malta participated in the Fifteenth Conference of Ministers of Interior Affairs of the 5 plus 5 dialogue, held in Algiers

in April 2013. Malta is also an active participant in the 5 plus 5 defence initiative and hosted the meeting of Ministers of Defence of the 5 plus 5 dialogue in December 2010 (when the Presidency was passed on to Mauritania), having held the Presidency of the 5 plus 5 defence initiative for longer than expected. The Armed Forces of Malta are also very active in the Canale exercise, an Italo-Maltese aero-maritime exercise organized under the aegis of the defence initiative. These activities are another example of Malta's commitment to security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region through exchange of information, expertise and interoperability by means of the defence initiative.

Malta considers the United Nations and its treaty bodies to be a tool towards providing global security and stability, especially those that provide arms control mechanisms relating to weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. Hence, Malta is a party to the major international non-proliferation instruments and implements all effective and necessary control measures aimed at preventing illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery and related materials, including the adoption of legislative measures and the enforcement of appropriate sanctions for the violation of such measures. Malta works in concert with its fellow States members of the European Union to further its own non-proliferation goals and those of the Union.

Malta supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the implementation of confidence-building measures worldwide, in particular in the Mediterranean region. It supports concrete and practical measures for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in which the parties called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Malta participated in the seminars organized by the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium that took place in July 2011 and November 2012.

From a more technical point of view, Malta submits reports according to the seven categories of the reporting forms of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and to the Office for Disarmament Affairs, on small arms and light weapons. Further to General Assembly resolution 64/22, Malta submits its military expenditure reports using the standardized United Nations reporting forms, which include data and information relating to the expenditure incurred on personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement and construction, as well as research and development. In this regard, it promotes a policy of openness and transparency in military matters. Malta is continuously supportive of the United Nations efforts to restrict the proliferation of weapons and to encourage arms control and disarmament, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction.

Netherlands

[Original: English]
[31 May 2013]

At its sixty-seventh session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/75, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region".

The following is in response to the request of the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat for the view of the Government of the Netherlands on the issues covered by the resolution for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.

The Netherlands, like other States members of the European Union, believes that European security is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean region. The Netherlands takes its responsibility bilaterally through the European Union and through other multilateral forums by playing a role in international efforts to enhance peace and security in the Mediterranean region.

Security and stability in the Mediterranean region also contributes to the alleviation of tensions beyond the region. The Netherlands calls on all States of the Mediterranean region that have not yet done so to accede to all multilaterally negotiated, legally binding instruments related to disarmament and non-proliferation, in order to strengthen peace and security.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]

[29 May 2013]

For historical and geographical reasons, the Mediterranean region has always been a priority for Spain in all respects.

As indicated in the Spanish Security Strategy, adopted in 2011, "the peace and prosperity of the southern Mediterranean are essential to our security and to the security of Europe as a whole. Through their relationship with these countries, ... Spain and the European Union will contribute to their democratic, economic and social development, in accordance with the needs and expectations of their inhabitants, in the belief that such development will foster peace and security in the land that we share".

The National Defence Directive of 31 July 2012 is a strategy document that sets out the most significant issues from an international perspective; these include, inter alia, the emergence of new world powers and the strengthening of existing ones, the global financial and economic crisis, unrest in the Mediterranean, instability in the Sahel, nuclear proliferation and piracy. The Mediterranean region therefore requires a framework for ongoing action and decision-making with a view to the development of a defence policy at this time of extraordinary intensity.

Spain's defence policy for the Mediterranean region is in line with the general action strategy and guidelines for its current defence policy document, which states that, given its strategic location, Spain must ensure the consolidation of a secure environment, particularly in the Mediterranean region, taking into account the fact that stability in the Mediterranean basin will only be achieved if adequate progress is made in its surrounding regions, namely, the Middle East and the Sahel:

- It complies rigorously with international law;
- It is a policy with a strong multilateral focus that was developed within the framework of various initiatives and organizations with which Spain is involved: the Mediterranean Dialogue within the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization (NATO); the Union for the Mediterranean¹ within the European Union; the activities carried out with the Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); and the Five plus Five initiative, in which Spain, together with nine other countries from both sides of the Mediterranean, participates. In all these multilateral forums, Spain has consistently demonstrated an active and highly committed policy in terms of its relevant roles in the Mediterranean region;

- In addition to this multilateral focus, Spain supports all security and defence initiatives that facilitate dialogue and promote bilateral cooperation among countries in the Mediterranean region, especially through defence diplomacy.

This is a policy that reflects a high level of commitment, as our presence in the eastern Mediterranean testifies. In Lebanon, as part of the complex mission of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), some 600 Spanish troops are working for global stability in a specific area with many implications not only for the surrounding Middle East region, but for the entire world.

Spain's defence policy seeks to build trust through cooperation, proposes lines of action and objectives for the international community and plays a role in conflict resolution. This responsibility is not shouldered solely by a single ministry; it is based on a multidisciplinary approach and coordinated action by all the relevant public agencies, coupled with the combined efforts of civilians and the military and of public and private entities.

The failure to find a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is one of the primary causes of instability in the Mediterranean region and constitutes a serious obstacle to cooperation in that region. It is therefore a priority of Spain in its activities abroad to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East on the basis of the international community's consensus on the urgent need to adopt and implement without delay the solution of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. Spain believes that such a solution must be accompanied by the forging of peace between Israel and its other Arab neighbours and of a new relationship between Israelis and the Arab and Muslim world. Working together with other members of the European Union and with the Quartet,² as well as the Arab States, Spain will spare no effort in striving towards that objective. It is crucial to bring about the resumption of the political process between the parties, thus helping to build mutual trust, and to avoid a crisis or anything that could reverse the progress made thus far, such as settlement expansion or further outbreaks of violence in Gaza. Spain will continue to support a solution based on international law and the mutual agreement of both parties.

However, it cannot be denied that the Mediterranean is a region of highly complex and diverse social, religious, economic and value systems; therefore, the greatest challenge is to find or develop strategies that foster integration and

¹ The Union for the Mediterranean is a cooperation forum that was established on 13 July 2008, at the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, in order to promote progress on peace processes and stability in the Mediterranean region. It comprises 43 countries representing more than 750 million citizens of countries on the Mediterranean coast and countries of the European Union. Its goal is to foster cooperation on specific development projects in order to encourage regional integration.

² The members of the Middle East Quartet are the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations.

cooperation. No further evidence of this is needed than the recent events in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, which have resulted in the death of innocent civilians and changes in Government or armed interventions in order to ensure the protection of the population and respect for human rights.

There are, moreover, significant differences in perceptions, including with regard to security and defence. The establishment of a system of measures to foster trust and security among the Mediterranean countries could thus prove crucial. A system of demonstrated effectiveness, such as that which already exists within OSCE, could be a good starting point if adapted to the Mediterranean context.

The system could be based on a Mediterranean security charter in which the geographical region of the Mediterranean would be considered an integral security area. The charter would include a series of measures to foster trust and security, a code of good conduct for Mediterranean countries and a mechanism for exchanging information which would allow Mediterranean countries to better coordinate their individual security agendas.

The measures to be promoted in order to foster mutual trust, and thus to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region, include the following:

- Increased cooperation in meeting global security challenges such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, organized crime, mass population movements and drug trafficking;
- Establishment of mechanisms for consultation and exchange of military information;
- Cooperation in establishing mechanisms for conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation;
- Promotion of the signing and ratification and upholding the objectives of international treaties and agreements on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation;
- Promotion of the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery;
- Strengthening of cooperation and integration among Mediterranean countries and furthering of their contribution to peacekeeping operations, especially those linked to the Mediterranean region;
- Reinforcement of cooperation and assistance programmes in the area of security and defence and promotion of exchanges of military units and observers in exercises, training, visits to military units and General Staff meetings;
- Expansion and strengthening of mechanisms for the provision of armed forces support to civilian authorities in the event of an emergency or disaster;
- Continuation of the efforts of the Five plus Five Defence College (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, plus France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain). The Ministerial Declaration of Cagliari of 10 December 2008 marked the official launching of the Five plus Five Defence College, an online

school established to address common security and defence issues in the 10 partner countries and to improve mutual awareness on the part of the countries on both shores of the Western Mediterranean, as well as to facilitate the exchange of experience and networking among the participants. The activities of the College are shared among the member countries each year on a voluntary basis. The working sessions of the third session of Module 1 of the Advanced Course of the Five plus Five Defence College, organized by the School of Advanced Defence Studies (EAEDE), were held from 10 to 14 December 2012 with the participation of 22 officials (generals, colonels and navy captains) from Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Spain. Spain will hold the presidency of the Five plus Five defence initiative (on a rotating basis) in 2014;

- Strengthening of cooperation programmes on maritime security and the control of maritime traffic;
- Continuation of the international seminars on security and defence in the Mediterranean, which have been held annually in Barcelona since 2002, with a view to contributing to the political and academic debate on security and defence in the Mediterranean;
- Promotion of activities that lead to greater transparency in defence planning and in national budget control processes;
- Promotion of activities to foster democratic oversight of national defence and national security forces.



General Assembly

Distr.: General

12 July 2013

English

Original: Arabic/Chinese/English/
French/Spanish

Sixty-eighth session

Item 99 (cc) of the preliminary list*

General and complete disarmament

Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

	Page
I. Introduction	2
II. Replies received from Member States	2
Argentina	2
Armenia	2
Burkina Faso	5
China	7
Czech Republic	7
Germany	8
Jordan	9
Montenegro	10
Spain	10

* A/68/50.



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 67/62 on conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels, the General Assembly decided to give urgent consideration to the issues involved in conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels and requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the subject and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty eighth session.
2. Pursuant to that request, on 18 March 2013, the Secretariat sent a note verbale to Member States requesting their views on the subject. As of the writing of the present report, replies have been received from the following States: Argentina, Armenia, Burkina Faso, China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Jordan, Montenegro and Spain. These replies are reproduced in section II below. Subsequent replies will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Member States

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[6 May 2013]

The Ministry of Defence of the Argentine Republic fully agrees with the proposal contained in paragraph 3 of resolution 67/62, and understands the need for principles that serve as a framework for regional agreements, which will enhance mutual trust between countries in the region by helping to establish tighter controls over conventional arms.

Armenia

[Original: English]
[8 May 2013]

United Nations resolution 67/62 offers an appropriate opportunity to raise issues and concerns related to conventional arms control at the regional and subregional level, to examine sources of disagreement and to identify opportunities to maintain and improve cooperation in this field.

Armenia reiterates its strong support for regional cooperation in the sphere of conventional arms control, which plays a significant role in promoting confidence-building and contributing to regional peace and security.

Guided by this principled approach, Armenia contributes to conventional arms control within the framework of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the NATO Partnership for Peace/Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, making every effort to further strengthen the conventional arms control regime in the European area in general and the region of South Caucasus in particular.

Conventional arms control at the regional level

Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe

The Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe is one of the pillars of security and stability in the region. Its implementation has promoted an unprecedented and wide-scale disarmament process in Europe, sizably reduced the number of armaments, increased transparency and created an unprecedented culture of military-to-military cooperation. The Treaty has played a vital stabilizing role during the transition period in the European security environment.

Armenia is committed to the strict implementation of the provisions of the Treaty. In line with its Treaty obligations, Armenia receives inspection teams and exchanges information on the armed forces of Armenia, their structure, areas of deployment and armaments and equipment restricted under the Treaty. The reports of the inspection teams clearly state that Armenia is fully implementing the Treaty.

Armenia is concerned by the discord in the negotiations to strengthen and modernize the conventional arms control regime in Europe. The Armenian side advocates resumption of the negotiation process and modernization of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, or the elaboration of a new legally binding document, which must be comprehensive, including the key provisions and elements of the Treaty in Conventional Forces in Europe. Its implementation should not be subject to any conditions. Armenia deems it expedient to include in any new treaty provisions on sanctions for the violation of the treaty, which would improve its effectiveness. The current ceilings of conventional armaments and equipment restricted under the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe must be retained and lowered where possible, based on a national choice, in order to better reflect the prevailing security environment in Europe. The obligation to eliminate the disparity between the established ceilings and actual higher holdings should be strictly observed.

OSCE confidence- and security-building measures

The main tools for the Republic of Armenia in the field of conventional arms control are the OSCE confidence- and security-building measures: the Vienna Document 2011 on confidence- and security-building measures, the Global Exchange of Military Information, Code of Conduct. Armenia considers the OSCE confidence- and security-building measures to be part of its own security structure and as an important means for reducing actual and perceived threats to its own and to broader regional security.

Armenia actively participates in the implementation of the provisions of the Vienna Document, including receiving inspection teams and evaluation visits and exchanging relevant annual information.

The Armenian side has made significant contributions to the updating of the Vienna Document through its support for most of the suggestions on its modernization, some of which were adopted as decisions of the Forum for Security Cooperation and later incorporated into the Vienna Document 2011. Armenia advocates further modernization of the Vienna Document for preserving and strengthening security and stability in the European region, especially in the light of existing difficulties with the modernization of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe.

Armenia provides an annual national report on conventional arms transfer to the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre. The report is an important tool for promoting transparency among the OSCE member States in the field of their military cooperation and defence policy.

Situation with the conventional arms control regime at the subregional level

The fundamental role and significance of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe remains highly relevant in the South Caucasian region, where, unfortunately, Azerbaijan continues very dangerous military build-up, leading to heavy militarization of the region and deterioration of the conventional arms control regime at the subregional level. According to official information on implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe and other official sources, including the United Nations Register, as of 1 January 2013 Azerbaijan significantly exceeds its established ceilings in three categories of equipment restricted under the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. The Azerbaijani holdings in battle tanks are 412 (permitted ceiling is 220), its holdings in armoured combat vehicles are 587 (permitted ceiling is 220), and its holdings in artillery are 688 (permitted ceiling is 285). In 2012, Azerbaijan has acquired at least 31 battle tanks, 173 armoured combat vehicles, 90 pieces of artillery, 5 combat and combat capable training aircraft and 4 attack helicopters. Thus, Azerbaijan continues its policy of pursuing a wide-scale military build-up and the non-declaration of a significant amount of acquired armaments.

Azerbaijan continues its usual practice of declaring in its annual exchange of information, that certain units of its armed forces are located along the Nagorno Karabakh conflict line and their peacetime location is "on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan occupied by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia". Along with these baseless and false motivations, Azerbaijan does not include such units in chart V of its annual exchange of information and rejects the inspection of such units, thus excluding 3 out of its 5 Corps or 14 out of its 23 motorized rifle brigades from requirements under the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe. This provides the Azeri side with an opportunity to concentrate large forces and military equipment along the borders of the Republic of Armenia and the line of contact with the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

The manifold increase in Azerbaijan's military budget over the last years, an increase of more than 25 times over the last 10 years (the defence budget for 2003 was \$135 million, while in 2013 is \$3.7 billion; according to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, in 2011 Azerbaijan was the first country in the world in terms of growth of its military budget, by 88 per cent), also heightens the tensions in the region of the South Caucasus and seriously undermines the negotiation process aimed at the peaceful settlement of existing problems, particularly the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. The negligent position of Azerbaijan in this regard has had a very negative impact on the efforts of Armenia to promote an atmosphere of trust and cooperation in the region.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]

[14 June 2013]

Conventional arms control on the African continent has had varying degrees of success in different regions. The chronic insecurity arising from the use of uncontrolled arms is a major scourge for all African States.

At the regional level

One source of concern for Governments is the terrorist threat in the Maghreb (North Africa); the hostage crisis at the In Amenas gas plant in Algeria in early 2013 is a perfect example. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb is active in the Sahel region, which has become a veritable sanctuary and gateway for all types of trafficking, including trafficking in persons, arms and drugs.

The resolutions of the so-called "Arab spring" in general, and the fall of the Libyan regime in particular, have resulted in a proliferation of arms outside this area of the continent. The Malian crisis seems to have been a direct result of the Libyan crisis.

In Central Africa, the situation with regard to conventional arms control is also bleak. In the Central African Republic, Seleka rebels overthrew the regime of General François Bozize using weapons which, unfortunately, have been used to commit abuses against civilian populations.

In the Great Lakes region, countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (which is currently the site of the largest United Nations peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)), Rwanda and Uganda have for several years been involved in situations that constitute neither peace nor war, with the presence of rebel movements such as the Mouvement du 23 mars and the Lord's Resistance Army. These groups rape, pillage and commit drug-related offences using weapons that, for the most part, slip through the controls and regulations in force.

East Africa, especially the Horn of Africa, has likewise not been spared from the scourge of the illicit traffic in conventional arms. Al-Shabaab rebels continue to plague Somalia despite the beneficent presence of African Union forces.

The same is true in Darfur, the Sudan, where, despite the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers, arms used by the warring factions continue to circulate illegally.

At the subregional level

The wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone are without a doubt one of the darkest pages in the record of uncontrolled use of arms in the West African region.

Today, sociopolitical tensions in Guinea-Bissau and Guinea, where stability and democracy are still fragile, threaten to result in the reckless use of conventional arms.

Terrorist threats and attacks by the Boko Haram Islamist sect in northern Nigeria are seriously infringing the individual and collective freedoms of civilian populations.

Similarly, the crises in Côte d'Ivoire and the Casamance region of Senegal cannot be ignored, since they inevitably involve the uncontrolled use of conventional arms on both sides.

Armed rebellions are also a source of uncontrolled traffic in arms, as in the case of the Tuareg rebellion in Mali. The illicit traffic in arms in that country is having a significant destabilizing effect on the subregion. Despite intervention by France and African countries, which has neutralized or reduced the capacity of some terrorist groups to do harm, it must be acknowledged that the terrorist threat persists.

Given that Burkina Faso is situated at the heart of West Africa and borders six countries, it cannot escape the problems associated with porous borders, which make it difficult to control the circulation of arms and to manage inventories. In order to bolster its capacity to tackle the illegal traffic in and use of arms, bearing in mind the scourge of arms proliferation, the Government of Burkina Faso has established bodies such as the National Commission to Combat the Proliferation of Small Arms, which, among other responsibilities, helps to implement a national policy to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. It has also established a high authority to control the import and use of arms, as part of its efforts to prevent any illicit arms trafficking in the national territory.

Meanwhile, the States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have adopted the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials to ensure efficient control over the proliferation of conventional arms in the subregion. The ratification of that Convention by the majority of member States has helped to strengthen the oversight of arms and ammunition transfers in the ECOWAS area.

Despite the countless efforts and legal instruments with which the international community has sought to combat and reduce their use, arms continue to be used every day, inflicting daily harm on populations, mainly civilian, at the subregional and regional levels.

In conclusion, conventional arms control requires the rigorous management of national weapons stockpiles involving:

- Regular reviews in which inventories are "purified" through the destruction of obsolete and decommissioned weapons;
- The periodic destruction of decommissioned ammunition.

Such operations, which are already carried out in Burkina Faso, could be given a formal structure through the establishment of a legally binding regional peer control system for conventional arms inventories. This system would reinforce existing subregional agreements, such as the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, which has been in force since September 2009 and to which Burkina Faso is a signatory.

China

[Original: Chinese]
[31 May 2013]

China attaches great importance to addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by conventional weapons such as small arms and light weapons and landmines. China is party to Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and to all its annexed protocols. China has earnestly implemented its treaty obligations and provided humanitarian assistance to victim countries. China has fully implemented the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, and has made unremitting efforts in legislation, law enforcement, capacity-building, international exchange and cooperation. China has submitted its national report on the implementation of the Programme of Action four times. In 2012, China took part in the second review conference on the Programme of Action, its preparatory meeting as well as a regional conference on the Programme of Action, including promoting a set of outcome documents at the review conference. China supports the conclusion of the Arms Trade Treaty, which could regulate transactions of conventional arms, and it has played a positive role in the negotiation process.

Czech Republic

[Original: English]
[18 June 2013]

Arms control is one of the priorities of the foreign policy of the Czech Republic, which makes an effort to actively prevent armed conflicts through preventive diplomacy, with an emphasis on multilateral cooperation. Should a crisis or armed conflict arise, the Czech Republic seeks timely resolution by diplomatic means whenever possible.

The Czech Republic is involved in the following international treaties and conventions in the field of conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels:

- Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.
- Agreement on Sub-regional Arms Control: article IV, annex 1.B, of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Czech Republic continuously implements all commitments stemming from international agreements on conventional arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. Their implementation is regularly reported to the pertinent organizations. Information exchange is taking place where required.

Activities of the Czech Republic under the Treaty in Conventional Forces in Europe:

- Organized and conducted one multinational inspection abroad (with participation of four inspectors from four countries);

- Organized two multinational training inspections (with participation of 20 inspectors from 10 countries);
- Took part in five NATO inspection teams abroad.

As regards the Treaty in Conventional Forces in Europe, the Czech Republic finds itself at the crossroads. The Czech Republic considers the preservation of effective conventional arms control regime as one of the key elements of European security. The Czech Republic stands ready to work with all States parties towards the revitalization of conventional arms control measures in Europe that will preserve the indispensable principles of transparency, restraint and host nation consent.

The Czech Republic, according to the Agreement on Sub-regional Arms Control: article IV, annex 1.B, of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- Sends two assistants to support article IV inspection.

Germany

[Original: English]

[30 April 2013]

Germany is dedicated to confidence-building and conventional arms control measures at the regional level. Germany attaches great importance and devotes considerable commitment to OSCE as its relevant regional security organization. Detailed information about Germany's commitment regarding regional security and confidence-building can be found in Germany's 2012 contribution to the database on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms (see resolution 67/49) as well as Germany's report on "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context" (see resolution 67/61).

With regard to the request formulated in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 67/62, Germany does not currently consider the Conference on Disarmament to be the appropriate forum for the formulation of principles regarding regional agreements on conventional arms control. Germany notes that non-universal membership of the Conference on Disarmament may prevent specific regional contexts from being adequately taken into account when formulating such principles.

Germany would like to add that it would consider it natural that States having initiated or sponsored a General Assembly resolution that includes a request of the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the given subject would report accordingly in a timely and comprehensive manner to the Secretary-General.

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]
[15 May 2013]

Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels

International arms control efforts began at the turn of the twentieth century at the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, which sought to restrict military spending and regulate the conduct of war by defining the rights and responsibilities of belligerent and non-belligerent States during combat.

Arms control measures aim to reduce military capabilities or fully prohibit certain categories of widely used weapons, given that armament is in itself a primary source of tension and war. For that reason, a reduction in the number of weapons would in turn reduce the likelihood of protracted armed conflict.

The General Assembly resolution on conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels promotes peace and security at the regional and international levels.

States that manufacture and maintain large arsenals of conventional arms have a responsibility to control such arms, and can make thereby an effective reduction in their number and strengthen agreements concerning regional security.

Conventional arms control should go hand in hand with negotiations and conventions for the reduction of stocks of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

It is important that conventional arms control measures respect the right of States to possess arms in order to guarantee their own security and that no distinction be made between States in that regard.

The principle of equal security for all must be the basis on which conventional arms control measures are taken. The security of any State represents a red line, and is the legitimate right of every State. The concept of State security must be the same for all States: the security of one State cannot be more important than that of another State.

In order to ensure the success of arms measures at the regional and subregional levels, it is important to consider and address the reasons for an arms race. The fact that one regional power is heavily armed will prompt the other States of the region to acquire arms in order to maintain strategic balance in respect of conventional arms.

It is therefore essential to focus on resolving international conflicts and, in particular, the Arab-Israeli conflict, in order to prevent an arms race in the region.

Jordan has consistently affirmed its respect for the principles set forth in United Nations instruments relating to arms, sovereignty and the equality of States and for the right of States to own and acquire conventional arms for the purposes of legitimate self-defence.

Jordan is committed to United Nations resolutions and has signed numerous international agreements and conventions relating to conventional and other arms. It shares the concern of the international community in regard to the issue.

Montenegro

[Original: English]

[10 May 2013]

Since 2007, Montenegro has been a full member of the Agreement on Sub-regional Arms Control, under which the stockpiling and use of the following conventional arms are restricted: combat tanks, artillery with angled trajectory above 75 mm, armoured cars, combat helicopters and combat aircrafts, all according to the article IV of General Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the course of its efforts to enforce the Agreement, Montenegro carries out controlled inspections of weaponry, which are limited by the General Agreement in the territories of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (agreement parties), once a year (inspection of reported sites). In addition, Montenegro allows other parties to carry out one inspection per year in its territory.

Montenegro gives a significant contribution to confidence-building activities in the region. There were no complaints whatsoever, neither by other parties to the Agreement, nor by the representatives of OSCE, which controls the enforcement of the Agreement. In addition, information on the nature and the amount of controlled arms has been exchanged with other parties to the Agreement. Montenegro therefore fully fulfils all of its obligations as far as the Agreement is concerned.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]

[5 April 2013]

The ultimate goal of any system of arms control or confidence- and security-building measures should be to prevent conflict by reducing the dangers of misunderstanding or miscalculation of military activities of other countries, taking steps to impede covert military preparations, reducing the risk of surprise attacks, and reducing the risk of the outbreak of war by accident.

The measures agreed upon may be legally or politically binding, but in any case should meet a series of requirements that can be summed up in the following principles:

- Specificity: measures should be specifically negotiated for each case and each geographical area.
- Transparency: this should be based on exchanges of information and the establishment of regular contacts and free-flowing communication.
- Verifiability: the measures adopted should include a system for verifying their implementation. This is the only way to maintain confidence in cases of suspected non-compliance.
- Reciprocity: each party's gains in terms of a higher level of confidence in the other parties should be matched by similar gains in the other parties' levels of confidence. Otherwise, measures of this type will be much harder to negotiate.
- Voluntary nature of negotiations and mandatory nature of compliance: the parties should feel comfortable with the measures agreed at each stage of the

process. In addition, the political will required for the negotiation of measures of this type should be commensurate with the mandatory nature of compliance with these measures.

- Progressivity: the measures should be seen as a process in which new and more effective measures are progressively developed as confidence between the parties improves.
- Complementarity: care should be taken at all times to ensure complementarity between the measures adopted at the global (United Nations), regional, subregional and bilateral levels and to avoid the duplication of measures.

Moreover, an arms control regime, in order to be effective, requires:

- A consultative body to monitor the implementation of measures under its control. All parties should be represented in such a body, which should provide for the reporting of any problems encountered in the practical application of the measures, as well as for the negotiation of new measures or the modification of existing ones. This body should be able to exert enough political pressure to convince the parties of the need for full compliance with the commitments undertaken (the involvement of the most powerful countries in each region is therefore extremely important).
- A suitable system of communication that enables the parties to meet the response deadlines laid down in the various measures and that is flexible enough to ensure the flow of information needed to restore confidence in the event of any disturbances.

The establishment of confidence-building measures, especially among affected neighbouring States, the strengthening of border controls and the training of specialized staff, among other arrangements, could create a propitious environment for the elaboration of supranational (including subregional) arms control agreements.

In addition, regional and subregional conventional arms control agreements should take into account the importance of:

- Establishing new confidence-building measures among neighbouring countries and strengthening those currently in place.
- Establishing restrictions on the main categories of conventional arms systems and equipment, as an essential element for promoting stability, limiting the accumulation of arms and enhancing predictability between the parties.
- Compiling an arms inventory in the countries where such inventories do not yet exist.
- Increasing transparency measures within the regional and subregional forums themselves.
- Disseminating the objectives of such forums to countries in the area that have not yet endorsed them.
- Strengthening measures to promote universal adherence to the various international instruments.

- Strictly enforcing criteria for the issuance of arms export and import permits by national authorities.
- Strengthening mechanisms for monitoring weapons manufacturers and, in cases where the weapons purchased are not end products, suppliers and component assemblers.

**General Assembly**

Distr.: General
12 July 2013

Original: English

Sixty-eighth session

Item 100 (d) of the preliminary list*

**Review and implementation of the Concluding Document
of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly****United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament
and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean during the period from July 2012 to June 2013.

During the reporting period, the Regional Centre provided support to Member States in implementing international and regional disarmament instruments through over 70 assistance initiatives. The activities focused on assisting States in their efforts to combat the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and to address negative impact of small arms and light weapons on public safety and human security. The assistance provided to States of the region resulted in the destruction of 41,167 weapons and 51 tons of ammunition, and enhanced capacity-building in the management and safeguarding of 130 stockpile facilities throughout the region. The Centre trained more than 430 national security sector officials, including customs and judicial officers, on a wide range of small arms control matters, including marking, tracing and stockpile management. The Centre also supported public policy dialogue on small arms control and legislative reforms in 13 States, resulting in the development of national policies, regulations and national action plans. The Centre provided legal expertise on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and on the establishment of national agencies and bodies responsible for its oversight. The Centre mainstreamed women's issues in its programme of work and made concerted efforts to promote the participation of women and to highlight their contribution to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

* A/68/50.



The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Member States and other partners that supported the Regional Centre's operation and programmes with financial and in-kind contributions, and calls upon those in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions to the Centre.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 67/66, the General Assembly reiterated its strong support for the role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in the promotion of United Nations activities at the regional and subregional levels to strengthen peace, disarmament, stability, security and development among its Member States, and encouraged the Centre to further develop activities in all countries of the region in the important areas of peace and disarmament, and development.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution at its sixty-eighth session. The present report, submitted pursuant to that request, covers the activities of the Regional Centre from July 2012 to June 2013. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2012 is contained in the annex to the report.

II. Functioning and mandate

3. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, located in Lima, was established in 1987, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/60 J. The Regional Centre is mandated to provide, upon request, substantive support for the initiatives and other activities of the Member States in the region for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament and for the promotion of economic and social development.

III. Main areas of activities

4. Illicit weapons circulating throughout the region continue to wreak havoc on the safety of communities and impede the sustainable development of Latin American and Caribbean States. In response to the transnational nature of this public security challenge, States in the region have favoured subregional approaches and mechanisms to implement relevant disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments. The Regional Centre's technical expertise and assistance has been sought in efforts to achieve that goal. The Regional Centre has supported States in their review of national firearms legislation and the adoption of public policies to address the proliferation of illicit small arms, thus helping them mitigate a rise in armed violence. With a view to assisting in the implementation of international and regional small arms instruments, the Centre has developed new practical disarmament tools to standardize marking practices for Andean States, build tracing capacities in Central America, establish stockpile management capabilities in the Caribbean and provide legal and policy guidance in South American States.

5. Recognizing the important role of women in disarmament, the Centre highlighted the role of women in Latin America and the Caribbean as forces of change through a publication devoted to their contribution to the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

A. Public security programme

1. Technical assistance in weapons and ammunition destruction, and stockpile management

6. By providing technical assistance, specialized training and destruction equipment, the Regional Centre supported States in their destruction of surplus, obsolete and confiscated weapons, in compliance with international instruments and norms, such as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

7. The Regional Centre launched the second phase of its Caribbean assistance programme at a regional workshop held in Barbados on best practices and international standards for stockpile management and destruction. Five other Caribbean States participated in the second phase, which includes baseline assessments of stockpile policies and facilities. The assessment was conducted in Barbados (October 2012), Saint Kitts and Nevis (October 2012), Suriname (February 2013) and Guyana (June 2013), with the final assessment planned for Dominica in late 2013. The baseline assessments provided the States with objective information on their national capacities to destroy weapons and to manage stockpiles. The Centre also assisted the States in developing national action plans for stockpile management and weapons destruction.

8. In order to support adherence by States to internationally accepted technical norms for weapons destruction and stockpile management, the Centre developed 40 standard operating procedures, which are based on the International Small Arms Control Standards and international ammunition technical guidelines, which can be adapted to each State's particular administrative and operational systems. The standard operating procedures guide States on how best to manage weapons inventories, record the loss or recovery of weapons, assess risks and comply with security requirements during destructions and waste disposal options following destructions. During the reporting period, the standard operating procedures developed by the Centre were implemented throughout the Caribbean region and in Argentina.

Small arms destruction

9. The Regional Centre provided practical technical guidance to national officials in 13 Caribbean and South American States in the destruction of 41,167 surplus, obsolete and confiscated small arms. The Centre monitored the destruction processes and ensured that international standards were followed since national destruction measures and techniques may vary. In the Caribbean region, where smelting facilities are not readily available, the Centre opted to provide hydraulic shears to all Caribbean States. The initial five Caribbean States to receive the equipment during the reporting period were Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname. A total of 71 national officials were trained on international procedures for documenting, planning, implementing and monitoring small arms destruction operations. Training on the safe use and maintenance of the cutting equipment was also provided to ensure sustainability of weapons destruction capabilities.

10. The Dominican Republic serves as a significant example of the success of the programme provided by the Regional Centre. Following an assessment carried out

during the previous reporting period, national authorities, with the assistance of the Regional Centre, destroyed over 30,200 surplus, obsolete and confiscated small arms and over 30 tons of small arms and light weapons ammunition from military and police stockpiles. The destruction equipment provided by the Centre was instrumental in the effective destruction of those weapons.

Small arms and light weapons ammunition destruction

11. Pursuant to the recommendation on ammunition made by the Group of Governmental Experts¹ in its report (A/63/182, para. 69), to the effect that States should conduct the destruction of unsafe ammunition in a timely and environmentally benign manner, the Regional Centre designed and commissioned a reusable small arms ammunition burning tank. A total of 108 officials were trained and certified on the use of the burning tank in nine Central American and Caribbean States (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago), as well as on ammunition destruction in general.

12. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre assisted States in the destruction of a total of 51 tons of small arms and light weapons ammunition. All destructions were conducted and overseen in line with international standards and the international ammunition technical guidelines.

Stockpile management

13. Stockpile management is essential to improving the safety and security of weapons stockpiles and is therefore an important component in combating illicit trafficking in small arms, light weapons and their ammunition. Member States serve to benefit from assistance to improve the infrastructure of stockpile facilities, to develop safer procedures and to destroy surplus, obsolete or seized weapons, thus mitigating the potential threat of accidental stockpile explosions and weapons diversion into the black market. The Regional Centre has received numerous requests for assistance on the issue from Member States of the region.

14. The Regional Centre provided training to a number of security sector personnel responsible for managing small arms and ammunition stockpile facilities in Argentina and the Dominican Republic, enabling them to share their acquired technical know-how with their colleague officers through a "training the trainers" programme in order to ensure the application of standardized practices. Over 100 stockpile facilities in the region have benefited from the assistance provided by the Centre in that regard.

15. The Regional Centre also organized a seminar in El Salvador in July 2012 for 25 national experts and a regional seminar in Costa Rica in January 2013 for 34 technical experts from member States of the Central American Integration System, Colombia and Mexico. The seminars focused on weapons and ammunition destruction and stockpile management standards and best practices.

16. The Regional Centre provided technical assistance to Argentina in August 2012 on stockpile management, including a technical workshop on stockpile

¹ By its resolution 61/72, the General Assembly established the Group of Governmental Experts to consider further steps to enhance cooperation with regard to the issue of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

management for national authorities and baseline assessments of 11 federal stockpiles facilities. A training seminar was held in November 2012 for 30 officials from federal law enforcement agencies on stockpile management risk assessment and security planning. In May 2013, the Government of Argentina and the Regional Centre jointly inaugurated the renovated and improved main stockpile facility of the Argentine Federal Police. The Centre made recommendations on improvements, based on international standards.

17. Argentina financially supported the joint effort, which provided technical assistance to its national authorities. This represented a new modality under which the States of the region collaborate and financially support national activities undertaken by the Regional Centre in addressing the challenges of controlling small arms and light weapons.

2. Capacity-building and training on combating small arms trafficking

Inter-institutional law enforcement training

18. The Regional Centre has been successfully implementing its award-winning inter-institutional training course for security sector officers on combating illicit trafficking in firearms, ammunition and explosives. The course contributed to building the capacities of Latin American and Caribbean States to implement the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as related regional instruments.

19. During the reporting period, over 200 security sector officers from five States in Central and South America, and the Caribbean (Belize, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador and Honduras) participated in the training.

20. In addition, the Regional Centre, in cooperation with Colombia and Ecuador, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country offices, conducted a specialized binational course in July 2012 at the border between the two countries. The course served as a confidence-building measure between the two countries, which experience similar challenges in respect of their borders. The majority of the 43 trainees operate in border zones and received training on such issues as illicit trafficking in arms and the impact of that trafficking on the border zone; techniques for the investigation and tracing of illicit small arms in border areas; and information-gathering and judicial evidence management.

21. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and General Assembly resolution 65/69, and in recognition of the critical role that women play in disarmament and arms control issues, the Regional Centre encouraged States to nominate as many female security sector officers as possible to take part in its inter-institutional training course in order to ensure the increased representation and involvement of women in peace and security efforts.

22. The Regional Centre also stressed national ownership and sustainability in respect of the course by training the trainers so that the latter would replicate the course at the national level. Acquiring national capacities to conduct similar training contributed to the decision by El Salvador, and Trinidad and Tobago to incorporate the Centre's inter-institutional course modules into the standard curricula of the training centres for their respective national security forces.

Specialized capacity-building for the judicial sector

23. In response to requests from States for a specific training for judges, prosecutors and judicial police on combating the illicit trafficking in firearms, ammunition and explosives, the Regional Centre adapted the inter-institutional course accordingly. The long-term aim is to provide the judicial sector with better tools to address the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, through, inter alia, helping to reduce impunity and armed violence.

24. Two specialized courses for judicial officers and legal practitioners were held in Guatemala (September 2012) and El Salvador (October 2012). A total of 29 judicial officers and 33 legal practitioners benefited from the course, which provided training on the technical aspects of firearms and ammunition control, including ballistic information, crime scene management and chain of custody, as well as a simulation of a hearing on illicit trafficking in small arms. It is important to note that 37 per cent of the participants of the two legal training courses were women.

3. Legal assistance and policy support on small arms control

25. Robust policy and legal frameworks are fundamental to strengthening the fight against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, and represent key components of the enforcement of related laws. Assisting States in aligning their national legislation on controlling small arms and light weapons with their obligations under international and regional instruments is of particular importance.

Public security policy seminars

26. The Regional Centre organized a national seminar in Guatemala in September 2012 on regional best practices in developing control of small arms and light weapons and national policies on armed violence prevention. A total of 26 senior-level Guatemalan policymakers, as well as the technical secretariat of the Guatemalan National Security Council, participated in the seminar. The seminar supported the Government's reassessment of its institutional framework for addressing the issues of trafficking in small arms and light weapons, and armed violence. The seminar contributed to the creation in April 2013 of a national commission on armed violence prevention.

27. The Regional Centre also supported a policy seminar on the control of small arms and light weapons in El Salvador, which was held in the country in October 2012 and at which a number of legislators and parliamentarians discussed current national legal frameworks and policy on armed violence reduction.

28. The Regional Centre collaborated with the Honduras National Secretary of Public Security and the UNDP country office in organizing a high-level policy discussion seminar in November 2012. Some 76 participants from the Government, civil society and international organizations assessed armed violence at the national and regional levels, policy options, including control measures in respect of small arms and light weapons, and initiatives on armed violence prevention and reduction. The seminar also addressed ways to improve the capacity of States to combat illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons; to reduce homicide rates; and to improve public security.

Legal assistance related to small arms

29. In response to a request from Honduras, the Regional Centre conducted a legal study and provided recommendations on measures to align the national law related to small arms and light weapons with international and regional legal instruments. The legal study was officially presented to national authorities at a workshop organized by the Centre in cooperation with the Honduran Centre for Research and Promotion of Human Rights in February 2013. At the workshop, 62 participants, including members of Congress and key senior officials, discussed the main components of a new bill on small arms and light weapons, and the recommendations contained in legal study undertaken by the Regional Centre. The new bill has since been approved by the Ministry of Security and Defence and is currently before Congress for consideration.

30. Upon the request of El Salvador, the Regional Centre carried out a comparative legal study on that country's legislation on small arms and light weapons vis-à-vis international and regional legal instruments. The study contained recommendations to strengthen control in El Salvador of small arms and light weapons. The Centre organized a workshop to present the comparative legal study in July 2012. A total of 16 Salvadoran policymakers and legislators participated in the workshop. In order to promote South-South cooperation, legal experts from Guatemala and Nicaragua were invited to share their national experiences in that area at the workshop.

31. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre also undertook legal studies for the following 10 Caribbean States, upon their request: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname. Through the legal studies, the respective national legislations on the control of small arms and light weapons were compared with the provisions set out in relevant international and regional legal instruments, and gaps, if any, were identified. Recommendations were also provided on how to align national legislations with existing international and regional legal instruments.

32. The Regional Centre expanded its online legal reference tools with the creation of a virtual library, in order to include the various national legislations in Latin American and Caribbean States related to small arms and light weapons. The legal studies undertaken by the Regional Centre for countries in the region are also available on its website.

4. Tools to implement instruments on small arms and light weapons

33. The Regional Centre has developed specific tools for the security sector officials of the countries of the region in order to enhance capacity to combat illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre provided technical assistance to the countries, upon their request, in such areas as the marking of weapons and ammunition, and developed new training courses for armourers and forensic ballistics experts.

Standardized marking practices

34. The Regional Centre developed regional technical guidelines on marking small arms and light weapons and ammunition, based on the International Small Arms

Control Standards and regional best practices. The guidelines consist of a series of recommendations for standardized primary and secondary markings of weapons and their ammunition. They were provided to the countries of the region and presented at the preparatory meeting of the second regional operation on combating arms trafficking, held in San Salvador in April 2013, and at the consultative committee meetings of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials, held in Washington, D.C., in April 2013.

35. The Regional Centre contributed to Andean Community efforts to standardize marking practices. Drawing from the technical guidelines developed by the Centre, Andean States discussed the adoption of a legally binding technical regulation to standardize the marking of arms and ammunition in the subregion at a meeting held in Lima in December 2012. The Regional Centre will continue to support the ongoing subregional consultative process of Andean States, with a view to adopting the first subregional instrument on standardized marking practices.

Tracing and forensic ballistics

36. In response to requests from Belize for assistance in tracing small arms and light weapons and ammunition through the use of forensic ballistic evidence, the Regional Centre conducted a specialized training course on operational forensic ballistics for Belizean officials in March 2013. The four-day training course provided technical training to 22 officials on crime scene management of ballistic evidence, forensic examination of small arms and light weapons and ammunition, recording and reporting, comparison macroscopy and residue tests for small arms and light weapons. The training course can be adapted and provided to other countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region upon request.

Armoury management

37. Responding to assistance requests, the Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, jointly established a regional armoury training centre in Port of Spain. The Regional Centre also organized a national armoury management course based on international standards, including the International Small Arms Control Standards and international ammunition technical guidelines, in Trinidad and Tobago in June 2013. Twelve armourers from the country participated in the course, which aimed at strengthening the capacities of the trainees to improve stockpile safety and security in respect of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

B. Disarmament advocacy programme

Weapons of mass destruction

38. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Verification, Research, Training and Information Centre, provided legal assistance to Ecuador in June 2012, which contributed to the establishment in January 2013 of a national authority responsible for the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

39. The Regional Centre and the Verification, Research, Training and Information Centre also collaborated in assisting Colombia in its implementation of the Convention at a seminar held in Bogota in February 2013. The Regional Centre supported the Implementation Support Unit within the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in providing technical and legal assistance in the drafting of national legislation related to the Convention. After the seminar, an informal working group was set up to examine the establishment of a national authority responsible for monitoring and promoting national implementation of the Convention.

40. The Regional Centre undertook outreach activities in the form of seminars and presentations at the request of several universities and diplomatic academies in the region. Topics discussed included nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the Nuclear Security Summit process, the United Nations disarmament machinery and existing legal instruments related to weapons of mass destruction.

Linking of security and disarmament matters to the United Nations agenda

41. The Regional Centre also participated, through a live webcast, in a Model United Nations workshop organized in May 2013 by the United Nations Information Centre in Mexico and provided information on multilateral disarmament machinery and processes and on key issues on the disarmament agenda of the United Nations.

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 65/69 on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control

42. During an event organized by Trinidad and Tobago on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, held on the margins of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Regional Centre presented its publication on promoting women as forces of change in the combat against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The publication, which featured the experiences and knowledge of a diverse group of women from the security sector and civil society organizations in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, was well received.

IV. Staffing and finance

A. Finances

43. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/60 J, the Regional Centre was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions made by Member States and interested organizations for its operation and substantive programmes. During the reporting period, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Centre were received in the amount of \$2,624,048. The Secretary-General wishes to thank the Governments of Australia, Argentina, Canada, Finland, Germany, Guyana, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, as well as the Organization of American States, for their generous contributions, which were critical in enabling the Centre to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the Assembly.

44. The Secretary-General reiterates his call to Member States, including those of the region, to make financial contributions to the Regional Centre.

45. The Regional Centre also benefited from close cooperation and joint undertakings with key partners, such as the Andean Community, the Central American Programme on Small Arms Control, UNDP and the Verification, Research, Training and Information Centre. The partners provided the Regional Centre with both in-kind and financial contributions, as well as cost-sharing agreements, which greatly assisted in the implementation of its activities.

46. The Secretary-General wishes to thank the Government of Peru, the host country of the Regional Centre, for its support, including its annual contribution, and calls upon Peru to continue to provide the necessary financial support to the Centre in order to offset the rise in its operating costs.

47. Information on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre for 2012 is contained in the annex to the present report.

B. Staffing

48. During the reporting period, the posts of the Director, one Political Affairs Officer and one financial/administrative support staff were financed through the regular budget. The Regional Centre continued to strengthen its team of small arms and light weapons experts through the hiring of legal advisers, forensic ballistics experts and armourers, thus enabling it to expand its technical assistance and support to the States of the region.

V. Conclusion

49. During the reporting period, the Centre undertook more than 70 substantive activities in the field of public security and disarmament advocacy. It also received more than 30 requests for assistance from Member States and partners focusing primarily on the control of small arms and light weapons.

50. The Regional Centre provided technical assistance to Member States through its integrated approach to combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons throughout the region, including technical assistance in weapons destruction and stockpile management; capacity-building and training for law enforcement personnel and legal practitioners on combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons; legal assistance and policy support on arms control; and disarmament advocacy for comprehensive responses to disarmament and proliferation challenges. Likewise, the Centre expanded assistance to States by providing practical tools to strengthen State capacities for standardized tracing, marking and armoury management, with a view to assisting States in the region in their implementation of international and regional instruments regarding small arms and light weapons.

51. Member States, United Nations partners and regional organizations recognized the quality of assistance provided by the Regional Centre, which contributed to reducing the circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in the region.

52. The Secretary-General calls upon Member States, especially those from the region and other partners in a position to do so, to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary financial and in-kind support to ensure that the Centre is able to carry out its mandate effectively and serve the needs of Member States in the region.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2012

(United States dollars)

Reserves and fund balance, 1 January 2012	2 073 782
Income, 1 January-31 December 2012	
Voluntary contributions	2 624 048 ^a
Interest income	14 273
Other/miscellaneous income	142 739 ^b
Total income	2 781 060
Expenditures	2 125 922
Programme support costs	276 370
Refunds to donors	164 702 ^c
Total expenditures and refunds	2 566 994
Reserves and fund balance, 31 December 2012	2 287 848^d

^a Contributions totalling \$2,624,048 were received from Australia (\$20,000), Canada (\$139,759), Finland (\$50,000), Germany (\$281,283), Guyana (\$1,009), Mexico (\$5,000), New Zealand (\$51,318), the Organization of American States (\$55,000), Peru (\$30,000), Spain (\$19,019), and the United States of America (\$1,971,660).

^b Includes cancellations of prior-period obligations of \$126,309, related programme support cost adjustments of \$16,420 and miscellaneous income in the amount of \$10.00.

^c Represents refund to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

^d Consists of reserves and fund balance, 1 January 2012, plus income received in 2012, less expenditures incurred and refunds made during the year. The information is based on the statement of income and expenditure for 2012. During the period 1 January to 22 May 2013, additional contributions totalling \$286,316 were received from the United States of America (\$233,816), and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (\$52,500).